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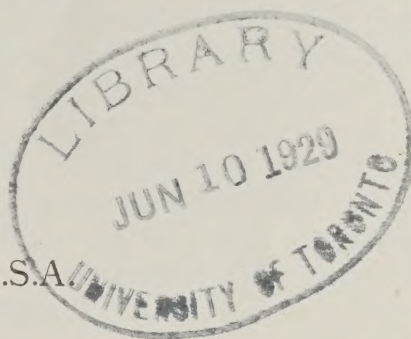
# DRESSING AND CUTTING LAMB CARCASSES

## LAMB RINGS

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DOMINION OF CANADA  
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THE LIVE STOCK BRANCH

H. S. ARKELL, B.S.A., COMMISSIONER

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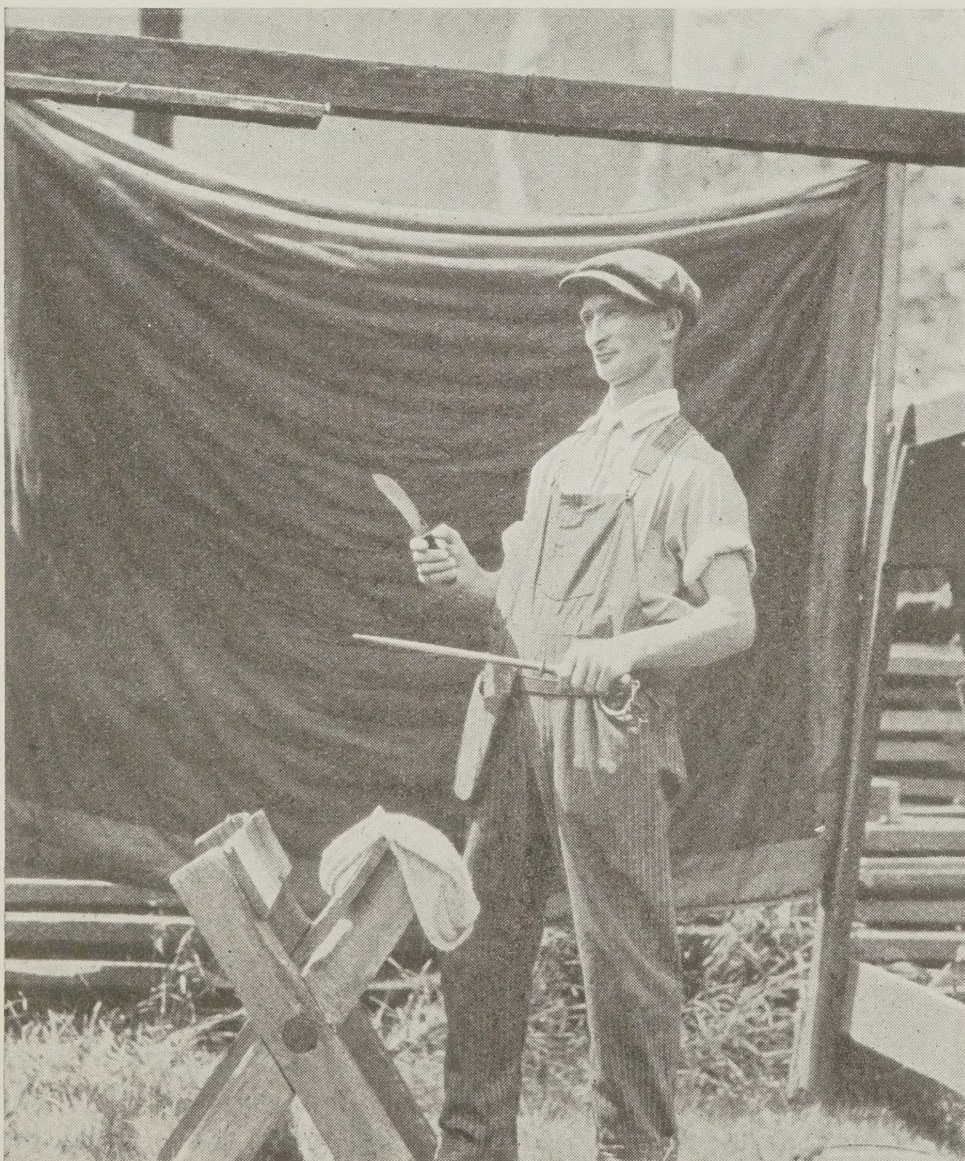


## LAMB : A USEFUL SOURCE OF MEAT SUPPLY

There is scarcely any better meat for summer use than a cut from a choice lamb carcass which has been properly handled in the killing and preparing processes. Many farmers and villagers appreciate this fact, as it is not uncommon for individuals or groups of farmers to slaughter several lambs from time to time during the summer and fall months to provide a supply of meat for their homes. Through careless handling in the killing, dressing and cutting operations much waste may result, and in many cases the meat may be distinctly off in flavour, thus detracting from its quality and palatability. In all cases, this can be avoided provided the proper methods are followed in slaughtering the lamb, in dressing the carcass, and in cutting the meat preparatory to cooking.

### SLAUGHTERING THE LAMB

Lambs should be fasted for a period of at least thirty-six hours before killing. Fasting is more important in summer than in winter. Failure to fast for the proper length of time is one of the most common causes of taint in the lamb carcass.



Preparing for killing.



Before killing, lambs should be carefully handled. Roughness and improper catching result in bruises and discoloured portions appearing on the carcass.

The equipment for slaughtering consists of a pulley, killing cradle, saw, knife, steel, two pails, cloth, three feet of strong cord, and a plentiful supply of pure water. An ordinary saw-horse with two boards of equal length nailed on the inner sides of the arms will serve as a suitable killing cradle. Skewers and backsets when being used may be made out of any kind of soft wood.

### DIRECTIONS FOR KILLING

When ready to kill, catch the lamb with the right hand by the left hind leg at the hock joint, holding tightly towards the ground. Reach forward with the left hand and grasp under the jaw. Now release the right hand from the hock joint and place at the tail-head and, while holding in this manner, lead the lamb to the left side of the killing stand. Retaining the hold on the jaw, reach



Position for sticking.

over the back with the right hand and grasp the abdomen firmly. Now raise the lamb over the right knee and lower carefully to the centre of the killing cradle. Hold the lamb by placing its head to the left shoulder and, while grasping the left front leg, pull the left hind leg and the right front leg to position of left front leg and tie securely. When tied, lower lamb flat on left side, placing



shoulder point even with the edge of cradle and allowing head to hang free. Place pail in position to catch blood. Reach for knife and place skull against right knee, keeping the head flat on its side. Place knife in position with edge toward gullet.

Stick between gullet and spinal column just behind lower jaw, severing veins on both sides. When bleeding properly, lay knife aside; raise and turn head straight with poll up; press down with right hand on poll and raise jaw with left hand, breaking the neck with a quick upward motion. Sever or break the spinal cord. When the lamb is dead, release the legs and place squarely on its back in cradle. It is now ready to have pelt removed.

## REMOVING THE PELT

### Skinning Front Quarters

Open left front leg from claws to knee on outside, then to breast point, and from breast point to point of jaw. Now open other leg to breast point. Remove claws on both legs at second joint and strip pelt to knees, freeing shoulder and neck.



Opening legs.





Removing claws at fetlock joint.



Place knee at back of breast bone and with hands strip brisket backwards towards hind-quarters and when free open evenly along centre of body to end of breast bone.



Clearing point of breast.





Front quarters finished.



### Skinning Hind Quarters

Open first hind leg at hock, making incision upwards to claws and from hock to tail-head, skinning portion of hind leg and freeing gambrel to claws.



Opening hind legs.





Skinning hind quarters.

Strip other hind leg in same way, freeing at the same time cod or udder to flank and dividing pelt from cod or udder to point of breastbone.





Clearing cod or udder.





Clearing abdomen.





Dropping pelt over sides after clearing abdomen.



Now strip sides well down to point of backbone on both sides, using fist.



Stripping sides.



## RAISING CARCASS

The process of skinning previous to hanging is now completed. Incisions should be made in the gambrel joints and the hind legs securely tied together. The muscle is also stripped and loosened in front legs. The breastbone should be sawn evenly from end to end after making an incision through the flesh with a knife along the middle. With a damp, clean cloth wipe all four quarters. The carcass is now ready for raising and may be drawn up with a rope and pulley or with a rope thrown over a beam. When raised, secure firmly at desired height.



Making incision in gambrels.





Tying of gambrel joints.

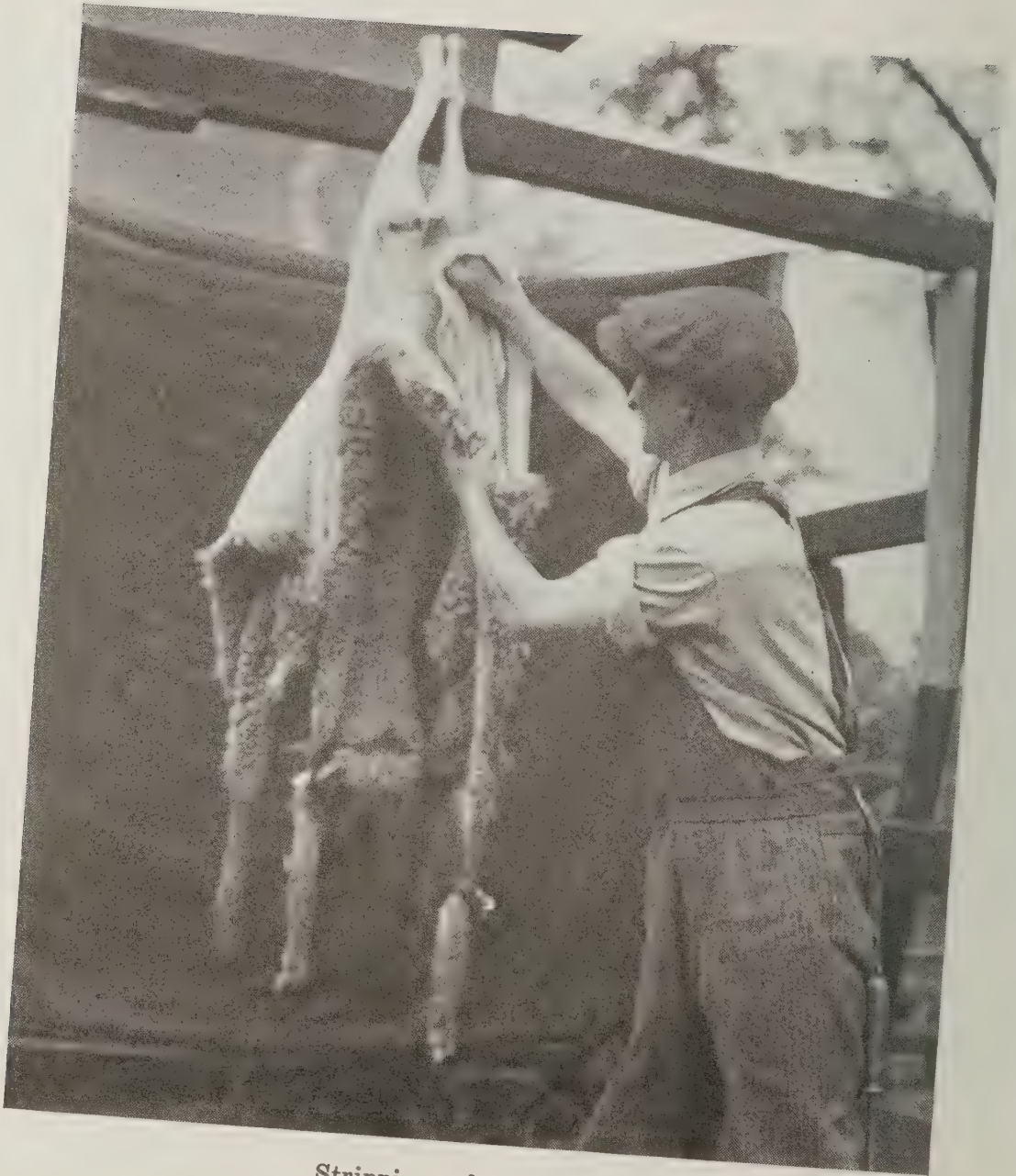


Skinning may now be completed. Grasp pelt at rump and with left hand clear point at end of rump and pull pelt clear of top of poll.



Freeing muscle in front leg.





Stripping pelt from rump.

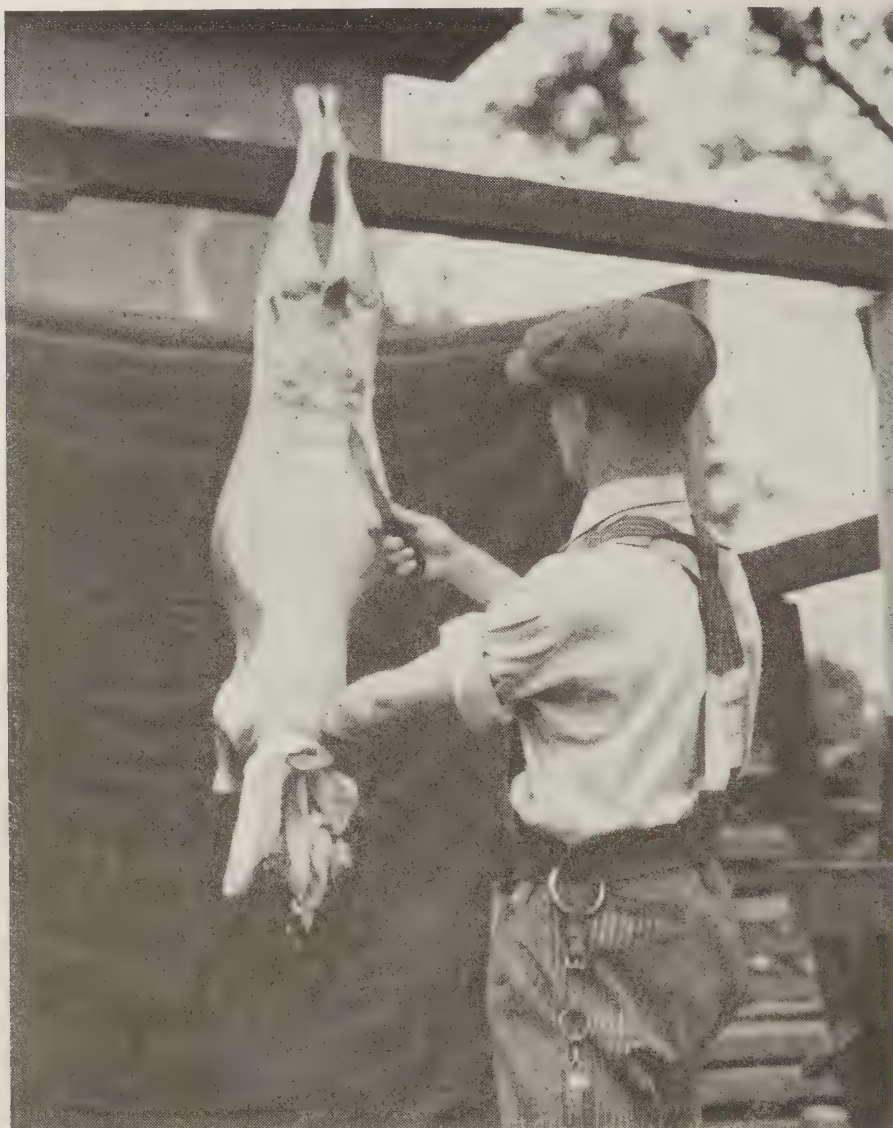




Stripping back to point of shoulder.



Clear blood outwards from veins which appear on both sides of loin and sides. In doing so use either knife or cloth, draining blood to point of shoulder.



Dispersing blood from veins on both sides of back.

Now skin head, removing pelt at the point of the nose. Skinning should not occupy more than fifteen to twenty minutes, otherwise gases form, resulting in tainted meat. Dressing should commence immediately after skinning.



## DRESSING THE CARCASS

Clean hands are very essential when dressing the carcass. Make incision at end of breastbone large enough for the insertion of two fingers. Open abdomen from breastbone to cod or udder, using wrist to hold back intestines and caul fat.



Getting ready to open carcass.

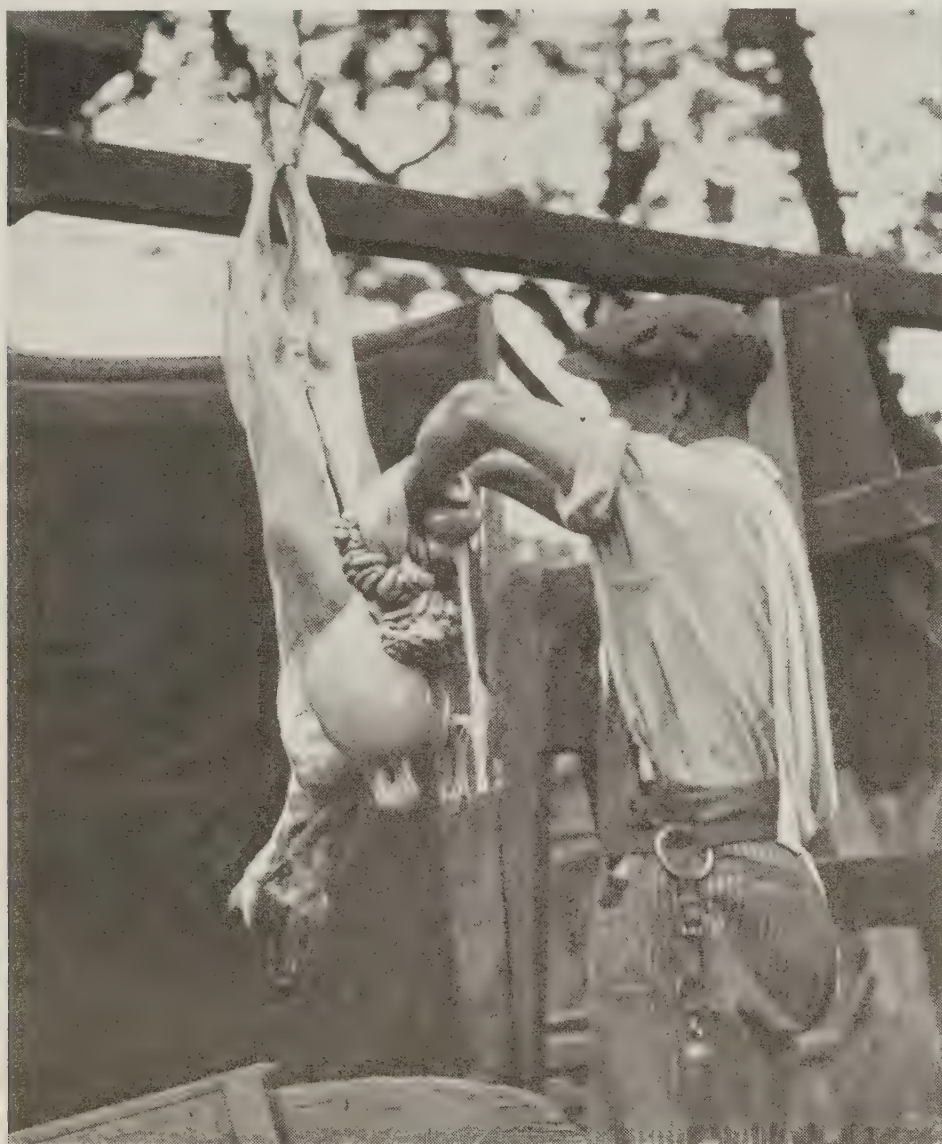




Opening the abdomen.



As soon as intestines fall free, remove caul fat, keeping it clean while doing so, after which the intestines may be detached.



Removing the intestines.

The pluck is then removed by detaching the liver, heart and lungs, stripping windpipe to head and severing head from body at break-neck joint. After carefully wiping carcass with a cloth, the caul fat is evenly spread over hind legs to kidneys and securely fastened with skewers. The carcass is now ready for cooling.



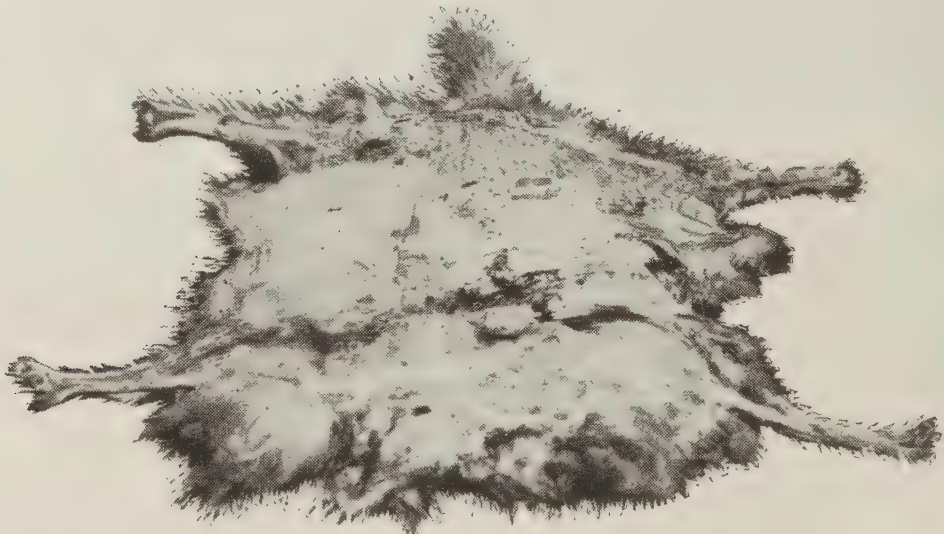


Carcass dressed and ready for cooling.

Great care should be taken in the wiping and finishing of the carcass. Never wash; use a damp cloth to wipe minor blood stains. The carcass should now be set away for at least twenty-four hours in a dry, clean, cool room where the air circulates freely. The carcass should be thoroughly cooled, but not frozen. Freezing and thawing tends to remove flavour.

### PREPARING PELT

Spread pelt out flat and evenly with wool side down. Take a pound to a pound and a half of coarse salt and sprinkle evenly over pelt, exercising special care with the head and legs. Allow pelt to remain in this position for at least twenty-four hours.



Pelt spread out for salting.





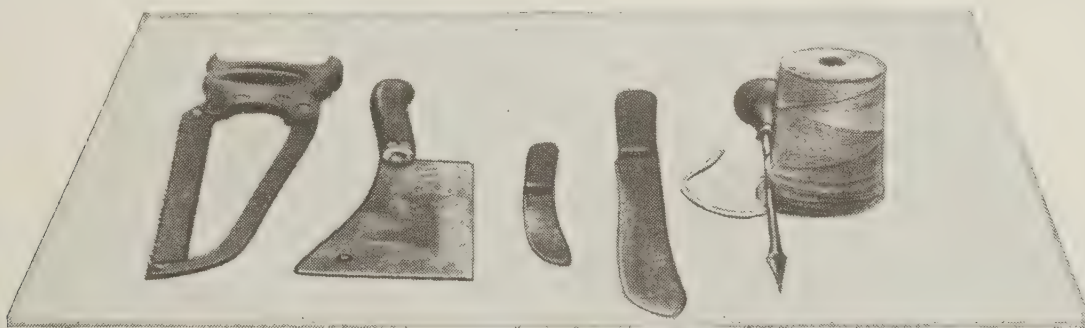
Pelt rolled and tied ready for shipment.

The pelt may now be rolled. Turn in legs and sides lengthwise. Bring head to about point of shoulder and tail and rump to centre of back and roll both ends, making a tight compact pelt. Tie tightly and securely with a strong cord. Store in a dry, cool place.

When pelts have to be shipped a long distance to market, they should be carefully spread, paying close attention to see that all wrinkles or folds are straightened out in the head, side or leg pieces. The salt should then be evenly sprinkled on and the pelt spread out for a few days until the salt melts and soaks in, after which it should be hung up to dry. Drying may be hastened if pelts are stretched by tacking to a wall or fence in a similar manner to the practice followed in the handling of pelts from fur-bearing animals. When thoroughly dry, pelts may be shipped in safety by placing one on top of the other and baled in lots of fifteen to twenty-five depending on size and weight.

### CUTTING UP THE CARCASS

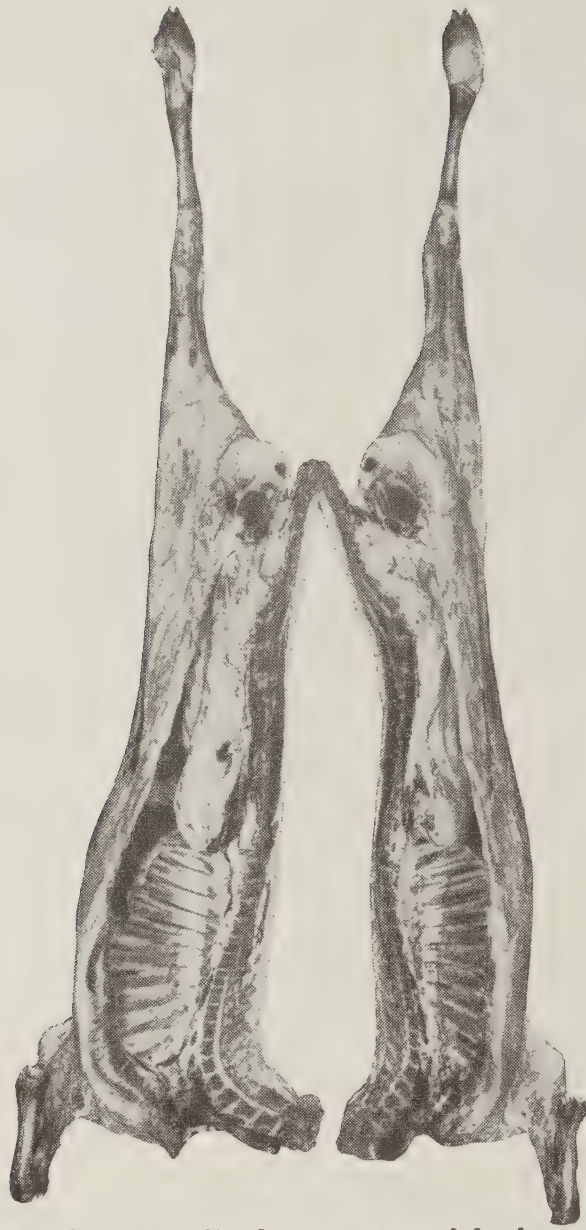
For cutting a lamb carcass, a block or ordinary kitchen table will serve the purpose, provided it is clean and smooth. The knife, saw and cleaver should also be clean.



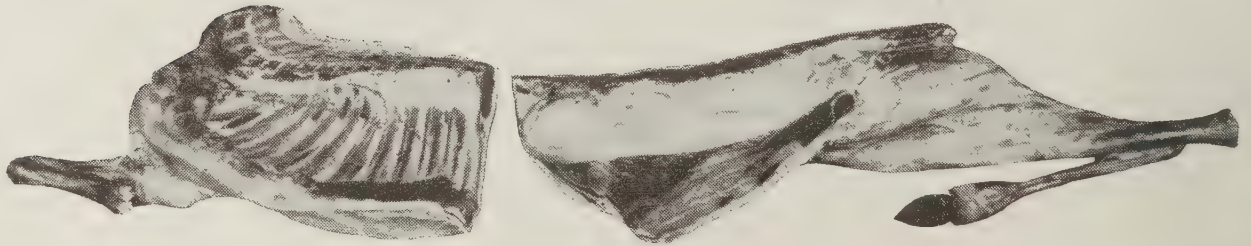
Tools required for cutting.

Saw or split the carcass evenly down the centre of the backbone. The sides are then cut into hind and front quarters, the division being made between the second and third ribs, leaving two ribs on the hind-quarter. The hind-quarters are cut in two in the same way as a hind-quarter of pork, by removing the loin from the leg.

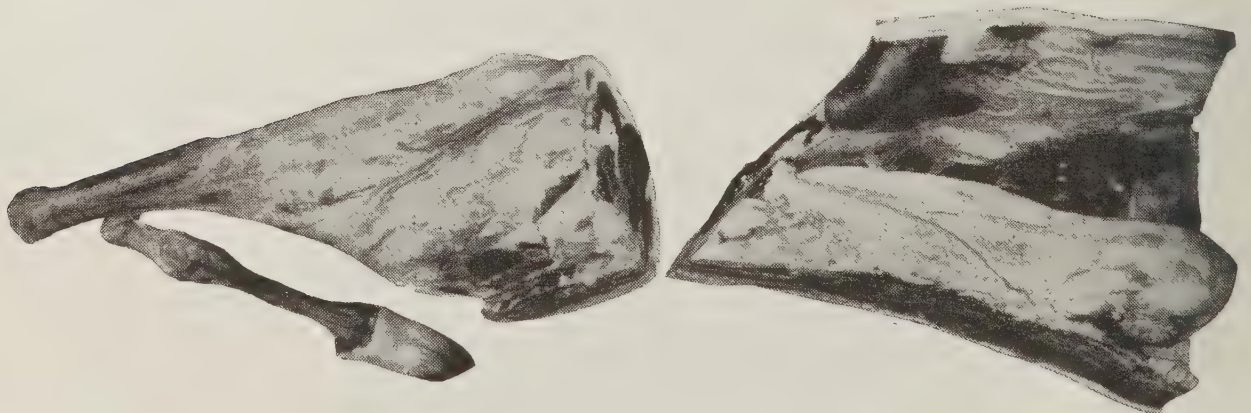




Carcass split down centre of back.



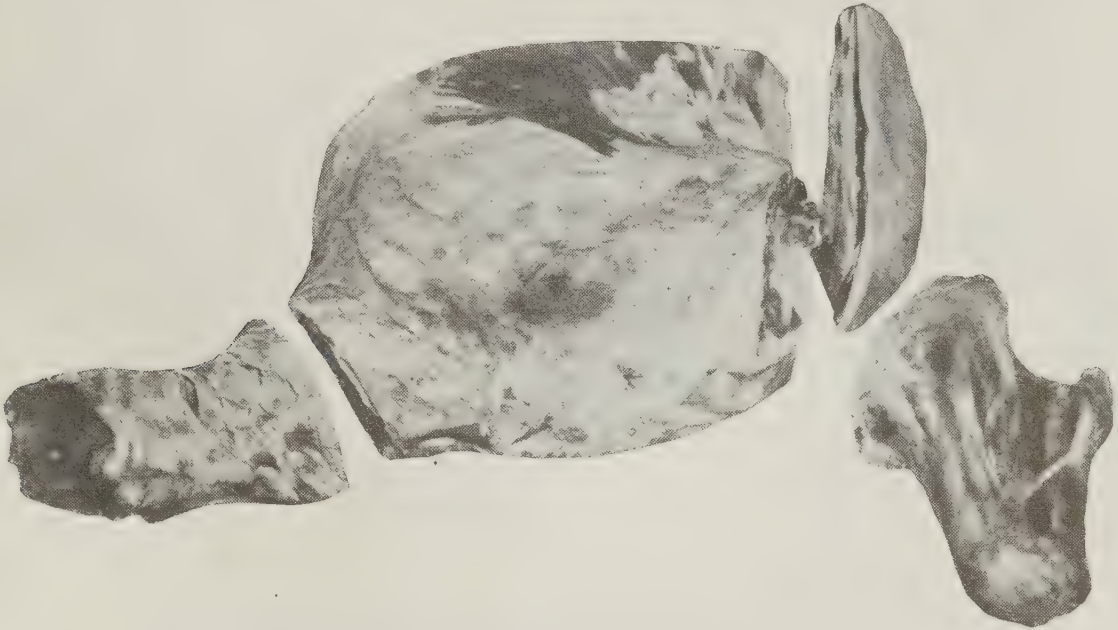
Side cut into front and hind quarters.



Hind-quarter cut into loin and leg.

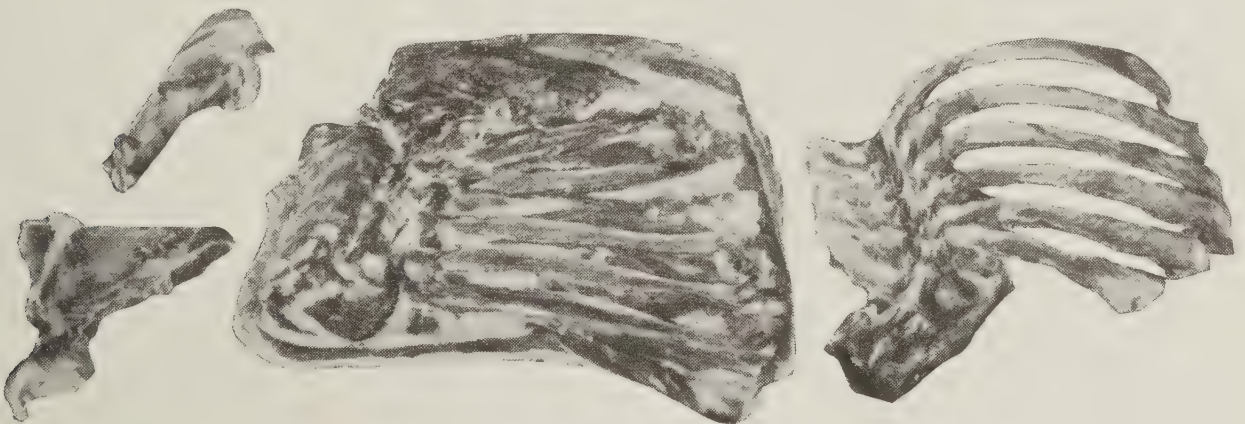


The front-quarter may be prepared for family use in several ways. Four or five rib chops may be cut off the front-quarter, after which a shoulder roast can be prepared by trimming off the lower portion of the brisket, the neck and the leg at the shoulder joint.



Shoulder roast showing trimmings.

An exceptionally choice roast can be prepared by boning the front-quarter after the rib chops have been removed. Little or no trimming is necessary before boning unless a specially choice rolled shoulder is desired, for which the front may be trimmed in the same manner as for a shoulder roast, then boned and rolled. In boning, first remove the blade bone by cutting the meat clear from the inside of the blade to the socket joint and stripping the bone free. Next strip and remove marrow bone. The small portioned chine bone with first ribs attached is then taken out. Trimmings from rib chops, neck and plate will make a nice stew or lamb pie. The shoulder bones make excellent stock for soup.



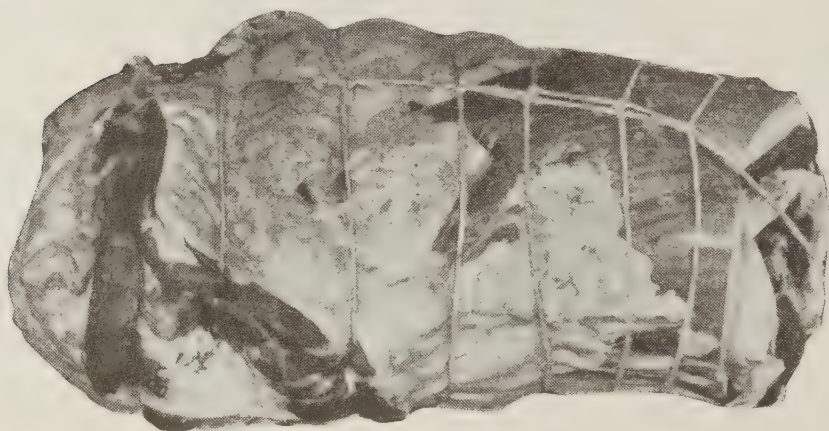
Boned shoulder roast.



When boned, the shoulder meat should be tightly rolled. Prepare for rolling by laying the meat flat, outer surface down; roll from shank end half way; then roll top end of shoulder to the centre; take sewing needle and draw both sides tightly together, keeping same proportion of meat throughout.



Bones and trimmings suitable for soups and stews.



Shoulder rolled and tied ready for roasting.

In selecting roasts such as the loin, rib and shoulder they should be carefully jointed at time of purchase. Jointing permits of easier and better carving when being served. Front quarters carry a little higher percentage of bone and hence are cheaper in price, but when properly prepared are nearly as good value.

### LAMB RINGS FOR FARMERS AND VILLAGERS

Eight members form a suitable lamb ring. With this number five to six pounds of fresh lamb is supplied from a single carcass, each member having a choice cut and a complete change of portion every four weeks. A ring of this size can be operated without special delivery as in the majority of cases boys or girls could call for the meat after school hours. In summer each member's allowance is readily consumed by the average family. The carcass cools quickly and provides a meat that is light and which in hot weather especially suits the constitution of both young and old. A lamb ring may be operated within a beef ring when eight members desire to use mutton.

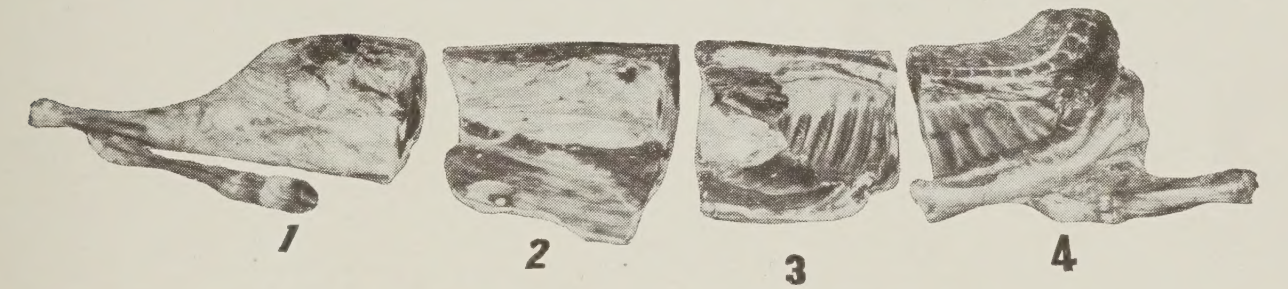
The operation of lamb rings has the advantages that there is little difficulty in bringing the lamb to slaughter and that the service of an expert butcher is not necessary, provided the farmer who does the killing uses reasonable discretion in the various operations.



When cutting a carcass for a lamb circle, the side is best divided into four portions, namely, the leg, loin, rack and shoulder. The cuts should be made so that the portions are divided as equally as possible in weights and in proportion of cheap to choice meat. The following chart provides a very suitable method of apportioning the cuts among members from week to week:—

SYSTEM FOR DISTRIBUTION OF MEAT IN MUTTON OR LAMB RINGS

Name	First Week	Nos. of Cuts	Second Week	Nos. of Cuts	Third Week	Nos. of Cuts	Fourth Week	Nos. of Cuts	Fifth Week	Nos. of Cuts	Sixth Week	Nos. of Cuts	Seventh Week	Nos. of Cuts	Eighth Week	Nos. of Cuts
J. Jones.....	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4
J. Simpson...	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1
D. Thompson	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2
C. Vail.....	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3
W. Kent.....	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4
S. Moffat....	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1
H. Crooks...	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2
Walker....	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3	Shoulder	4	Leg	1	Loin	2	Rack	3



Side cut for distribution to circle members.

### ORGANIZED DISTRIBUTION FOR LOCAL MARKETS

All our cities, towns, villages and summer resorts provide a market for considerable quantities of fresh-killed, dressed lamb at prices often approaching retail values. City markets provide an avenue for selling direct to the consumer which has not been utilized to the fullest extent by the farmers. Present market regulations covering most markets require that carcasses be sold in quarters unless a butcher's license is secured. The individual farmer naturally cannot afford to purchase a butcher's license to sell a few lambs, but a sheep club or county organization could well afford to consider the advisability of establishing a stand on city markets where lamb could be retailed to consumers in smaller quantities than by the quarter. Such a stand would greatly increase sales and also make it possible to provide a means whereby farmers in cutting sections can consign their lambs for sale on a commission basis without making it necessary to take the time to do their own selling. The market stall should be carefully selected from the standpoint of location. The stand itself need not be elaborate, but it should allow for a good display of products and should be kept scrupulously clean. The employing of a capable person to carry on the business is of prime importance. Besides being a good salesman, he must have had a practical knowledge of the proper methods of cutting meats, so that general satisfaction may result for the consumer. Under such circumstances, the business will be conducted in an economical and efficient manner for the farmers.

Lambs that are sold direct to consumers should be properly dressed and forwarded to market in good condition. When delivering by wagon to the station or market, the carcasses should be kept cool and free from dust. A wrapper of cheese cloth aids in maintaining cleanliness; keeps flies from coming in contact with the meat, and adds to the attractiveness of the shipment.











